The Quid Novi

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Anna McAllister | 3L

Wow McGill Law! Believe it or not here we are again - the last edition of the Quid for another academic year.

It has been an absolute pleasure to serve as your co-editor-in-chief again this year. Through my work on the Quid, I have been able to connect with current and former students alike, gaining increased appreciation for the rich diversity of our community. Due to a brief hiccup this semester in the form of eye surgery, I have not yet been able to tell all of the stories I have had the pleasure of hearing (stay tuned for my extended Blast from the Past with the first ever editor of the Quid!). I hope that you will stick around for another year as a reader so that I can share them with you come Fall.

I would be remiss if I did not take the opportunity to thank the incredible individuals who make the Quid possible.

Souang Wu, our fantastic art director, is honestly the brains behind this entire operation. The Quid would be but a sad google drive full of unformatted thoughts without her vision and direction. Under Souang's thoughtful guidance, our layout team comprised of Amy Huang, Camille Duhaime, and Julius Grippo, undertake the extraordinary legwork of stitching together each edition with care. I cannot express how thankful I am for their dedication and flexibility.

Kamil Chaoui and Gabrielle Torrealba, serving as our directors of distribution and social media respectively, are the wonderful people who make sure the Quid actually gets read. Kamil treks up Peel with the paper copies and ensures that each edition is delivered to the library for appropriate archiving. Gabby is completely responsible for our social media presence and uses her incredible artistic and comedic talents for all of our benefit.

Our copy editors, Thomas Power, Muna Tojiboeva, Paul Ye, Faith Dehghan, Brandon Grimaldi, Giuseppe Sutera Sardo, Ben Foster, Jerod Miksza, Despina Tritos, Kim Baronet, Wisaal Jahangir, Karla Tejeda-Iglesias, Jaime Fabian and Matthew Vamvakas, take our sometimes rambly, disorganized, and tipsy thoughts and make them beautiful, polished, publisheable and appropriate for the occasional sharing on the Dean's LinkedIn.

Obviously, our columnists deserve a massive thank you. Song-Ly Tran, Ali Hachem, Felix Desrochers, Tim Gulliver, Pénélope Beauchemin, Jessica Li, Nicholas Kamran, Sepideh Afshar, Ordren Deko, Thomas Lessard, Julien Bérubé, Ritchie Ngieme, Nathan Penman, Rose-Marie Maniatakos, Sophie Rehel, and Pénélope Beauchemin - you make

CETTE SEMAINE...

INSIGHTS

3 | L'IMPOSSIBLE
It Is Not Your Civic Duty to Make Yourself Ill

4 | THREE HOMES

6 | THANK YOU FOR LETTING ME BE YOUR AMBASSADOR

7 | COURSES AUX STAGES CUCKHOLDING

8 | COUCH SHOPPING

13 | OUR VOICES FOR A FREE PALESTINE/NOS VOIX POUR UNE PALESTINE LIBRE
An End of Year Message from LS4PM

COMMUNAUTÉ

2 | BATTLE OF MONTRÉAL'S BEST!

3 | THE LSA IS NOT THE UN

5 | FOUNDATIONS WITH FRATICELLI
An Overheard Selection from the Best Section

6 | LETTER OF THANKS TO ASEF FUND AND SSMU CLUBS FUND

12 | WE CAN DO THIS
With Astrology Anne

LSA Awards Voting ends Wednesday!

Results to be announced at LSA Coffeehouse this Thursday!

weekly publication of the Quid possible. Without your commitment to writing articles regularly, the Quid would not have the well-established and respected presence it does on campus. A huge thank you is also in order for our occaisional contributors, who write hilarious, vulnerable, touching, and inspiring pieces every week, rounding out the Quid and making it a true reflection of life at the Faculty.

Nous remercions tout particulièrement nos contributeurs français. Je sais que, comme pour la plupart des choses à McGill, la quantité de français contenue dans nos pages pourrait toujours être améliorée. Je vous remercie d'avoir identifié le besoin d'un plus grand nombre de contributions en français et d'avoir partagé vos voix avec nous.

No final edition of the Quid is complete without a heartfelt goodbye to our friends who are graduating. Many of our graduating Quid members have been working on the Quid longer than I have, and I cannot thank them enough for sharing their efforts and institutional memory with us all. I wish you all the best in everything you will do going forward.

I would also like to acknowledge our broader readership. This year has been an understandably sensitive and painful time for many of our community members. The kindness, patience, and understanding you have shown each other - especially when someone is sharing their thoughts so openly in a Quid article - has been incredibly appreciated. On the flip side, the enthusiasm with which you welcome our presence on campus, through Facebook comments on each other's articles or your incredible sense of humour at Skit Nite, makes this whole adventure worthwhile.

Last, but certainly not least, a sincere thank you to Pablo Mhanna-Sandoval, my wonderful co-editor-in-chief. Pablo was creative, enthusiastic, motivated, and just crazy enough to agree to join the rock and roll world of student journalism with me this year. As I am with the rest of my life, I am always cautious about who I let close enough to see how the proverbial sausage is made. I am thankful for Pablo's patience and understanding as we figured things out together. We have enjoyed lots of great times together bringing the Quid to you and I hope we will be able to do the same again next year.

Let the Quid be one of the many shining examples of why we are the best Faculty of Law to ever do it.

Yours forever and always,
Anna McAllister

P.S. All my love to my McGill Law muses; CO, EB, GT, JD, JH, and JI.

BATTLE OF MONTRÉAL'S BEST!

The McGill Supper Club

"St. Viateur or Fairmount?" is a question that has long plagued Montréalers. Last week's coffeehouse made a valiant effort to solve this debate. The MJLH, MLJ, and the Supper Club collaborated to celebrate Montréal's vibrant food scene and have attendees vote on who does it best. We rounded up food from a selection of local spots to battle it out in the atrium.

Well folks, the results are in.

Contenders: Falafel St. Jacques and Falafel Yoni
Best Falafel: Falafel Yoni.

Contenders: Pushap and Bombay Mahal
Best Samosa: Pushap (by one vote!).

Contenders: Sammi Soup and Qing Hua
Best Dumplings: Sammi Soup (by one vote!).

Contenders: Cafe Vasco da Gama and Campo
Best Pastéis de Natas: Café Vasco da Gama.

Contenders: St. Viateur and Fairmount.
Best Bagel: St. Viateur (was this really a debate?).

Contenders: Schwartz's and Snowdon Deli.
Best Smoked Meat: Schwartz's (Snowdon Deli remains the winner in our hearts).

Thank you for eating and drinking with us this year. À la prochaine!

THE LSA IS NOT THE UN

Pénélope Labbé | 2L

J'ai reçu la nouvelle de mon élection à la présidence de l'AÉD à New York, juste avant la cérémonie d'ouverture du National Model United Nations 2024. Ma semaine a débuté sous les meilleurs auspices, d'autant plus que j'ai eu l'occasion de visiter New York et de m'engager dans des activités diplomatiques pendant quatre jours, au détriment de mon sommeil et de mon portefeuille. J'étais sur un petit nuage, mais la réalité m'a rapidement rattrapée.

Lors de la cérémonie de clôture dans la salle de l'Assemblée générale au Siège de l'ONU, nous avons eu la visite surprise de Son Excellence, Dennis Tenners, président de ladite assemblée. Bien qu'il soit un homme de renom avec un parcours impressionnant, son discours s'est révélé décevant. Ses réflexions étaient peu profondes, évasives, dépourvus d'originalité ainsi que de sincérité. Certaines idées laissaient même à désirer, particulièrement celles se voulant féministes.

He received a standing ovation, but I remained seated. I couldn't help but think: "This man had such a powerful platform to address critical issues and leave a lasting impact on all attending delegates, yet he did not use it."

While his detachment and neutrality may be understood given his position, they fail to inspire me as LSA president. After all, our association is not the UN.

My role is to advocate for the best interests of our student community, even if it means challenging the status quo. But to do so effectively, I need to hear from you, McGill Law. Share your ideas, concerns, needs, or even criticisms.

In contrast to the UN, I am open to acknowledging and addressing criticisms. Recently, the incoming executive council received its first public criticism through an Instagram story highlighting its lack of diversity. This is a valid point, which is why I am committed to ensuring inclusive governance and collaborative decision-making through student consultation, ensuring that every decision made by the LSA is well-informed and prioritizes the needs of students.

Without criticism, there can be no improvement. Without hearing from you, I cannot effectively serve your interests.

On that note, I want to warmly congratulate the members of the incoming executive, with whom I look forward to collaborating, and to commend all the candidates for their excellent campaigns in the elections – your dedication and efforts have not gone unnoticed, thank you for your commitment to our community. I also want to express my gratitude to the current executive members for their outstanding work and unwavering support throughout the year. My first year within the LSA has been truly rewarding, largely due to your contributions, which have inspired me to uphold my commitments this year.

On se voit l'année prochaine,

Pénélope

L'IMPOSSIBLE

It Is Not Your Civic Duty to Make Yourself Ill

Penelope Beauchemin | 2L

C'est difficile de se lever le matin, manger une banane (pas bio) pour déjeuner. Se commander un café dans un vulgaire cup de papier et son couvercle en plastique parce qu'on a oublié notre tasse réutilisable dans la hâte de la routine matinale. Devoir conduire une automobile (pas électrique), parce qu'on est des étudiants qui ne travaillent (presque) pas et que la Tesla n'est pas (encore) accessible. Et je me sens mal, un peu comme un rappel constant dans le creux de ma pensée qui me susurre à l'oreille que j'échoue à être une bonne citoyenne. Que je composte probablement pas assez. C'est étourdissant d'être assis au restaurant avec des amis en portant une robe achetée à rabais dans un centre commercial. On s'amuse un verre de vin à la main, mais rien ne fait taire la voix qui nous en veut; à l'autre bout du monde c'est la guerre et les gens se battent pour leur survie alors que nous on rit dans nos vêtements non-éthiques parce que la vie coûte cher et qu'on ne peut pas tous se permettre d'acheter bio et local. Certains peinent à payer le loyer. Je voudrais faire plus. Je voudrais faire mieux. Je voudrais financer tous les refuges pour chats errants de la ville, la recherche médicale et ne jamais acheter de café sans certification équitable. La vérité c'est que c'est impossible.

Aujourd'hui, j'ai envie de te dire qu'à l'impossible nul n'est tenu. J'ai envie de lever une certaine culpabilité de sur nos épaules. On fait tous de notre mieux. On thrift nos chandails quand c'est possible. Parfois, on achète des bleuets importés du Chili, parce qu'on vit au Québec et que le sol est enneigé la moitié de l'année. On ne pourra pas individuellement changer le monde ou cesser entièrement de consommer…mais on a besoin de pleins de gens qui le font imparfaitement. Qui font de leur mieux chaque jour. Qui trouvent un équilibre entre consommer l'actualité et préserver leur propre santé mentale. Un doux mélange d'empathie, d'entraide et de limites personnelles.

THREE HOMES

Emma Butson | 2L

Despite the soul-crushing housing market I am very lucky to have three homes. "How does she do it?" you may be thinking, exasperated at this impossible feat, but let me explain.

I often refer to it as a shoebox, but my studio apartment is my first home. It's my safe haven. No matter what goes on in this cruel, crazy, awful, beautiful, wonderful world, I can pull out my teddy bear keychain and open the door to a world of my own making. Here, nothing hurts (except for the occasional stubbed toe) and I am protected. I am always enveloped by a cozy, perfectly girly, pink and flowery apartment bathed in soft orange light. One wall is all windows, looking on to the mountain so I get the best of sunlight, sunsets, rain storms, and the changing seasons. I have a few plants, all gifted to me when I first moved in – I have only managed to kill one (Sorry Laura!). I almost always have a vase of grocery store flowers going. I love sweeping and mopping on Saturday mornings, singing along to Kacey Musgraves or listening to one of the many podcast episodes I have saved over the week. I have hosted many a candlelit dinner in my sweatpants, with friends all shuffling in, making do with the limited seating by rolling out my yoga mat and taking turns in the big comfy chair I bought from Facebook Marketplace. We have had bottles of wine talking late into the night, laughing over the smallest things, debating the big things, and gossiping about the banal. When my long-distance partner of 9 years comes to visit after a hard week, he puts his bags down and tells me that this feels like home. Imperfect, with the landlord paint special over the electrical outlets more than a few times and closets falling off the hinges, but nevertheless this shoe box is imbued with all of the love I have been blessed to give and receive.

My second home is my childhood home, nestled in the heart of NDG. When I open the front door, I smell fresh pine mingling with my mom's oud-y perfume. I am greeted by hugs and kisses, snuggles from my perfect long-haired cat, Suzy, and a hot cup of coffee, a bowl of something warm, or both. There is art on almost every inch of the wall, books of all subjects exist in every room (yes, even the bathroom), and my mom always has a cool puzzle that she's working on. My brother will take me into his room and play me new music he's been cooking up and we laugh at inside jokes from our childhood. As a trio, we did everything together: from mourning lives lost to fighting over leftovers. I felt free to be me – emotional, angry, silly, feral, funny – unjudged and unencumbered by adulthood as long as life would allow it. It is here that I learned the more you love, the more you are able to love. With my desk in the living room, it felt like I never had space but reflecting now, I am grateful to have seen so much of daily life unfold just past the pages of my textbooks. I feel the safest in the world in these four walls – everything could be falling apart, world upside down, but I will be picked up by my mother and brother and carried to the sofa, healed by their ardent love.

The biggest of them all, McGill Law is my third home. Both Chancellor Day Halls are places I feel the most empowered to speak up and out about the people and things I care about. I can stomp through the hallways, cry over not understanding class content, and howl with laughter. In this place I feel confident and happy. Every day, I can count on being greeted by a smiling face or a friendly hug – how many people can say that of the places they spend most of their days? I have met some of the most incredible, vibrant, witty, thoughtful, kind, and intelligent people en route to class or at CoffeeHouse. I secretly look forward to the Margaret Baratta emails, waiting for the newest edition of the Quid Novi, and puzzling Ethics class de-railments. I relish in the quiet of the atrium early in the morning and whenever there's a plenary in the Moot Court, I get so excited that I get to sit with my friends who I only share one other class with. All of this is not gloss over the fact that I have faced genuine personal and academic challenges. My imposter syndrome has ebbed and flowed much like the water on the banks of the Saint Lawrence. I skip classes and skim cases to make things a little easier. Yet no matter the time of day, or year, whenever things get particularly tough, I know that if I turn to a friend and say "Thomson House?," I will always be met with an enthusiastic grin and a pat on the back. I have developed the purest of friendships amongst these halls, ones that nurture and console my inner child. I cheer for every peer's success and offer a shoulder to lean on when we inevitably face career disappointment. I always have time to chitty-chat about any area of the law and genuinely can't wait to see all the incredible things we do. Despite the sorry state of the world, I never doubt the capabilities of this student body. I feel a quiet calm about all of our fates, even if we're hyper-anxious about it now.

As McGill Law students, we like to criticize, complain, lament, and rage against the machine for many valid reasons. I have participated in this institutional rage myself. Yet as much as I can be frustrated with the way a class is going or at times be disappointed in Midterm feedback, I am a firm believer in the idea that you have to hate something just as much as you truly love it. So, the more we complain, the more we are able to show our love for the people, the professors, this building, and the law. It is here that I have found true belonging and community, amongst nerds and drama queens, the intelligentsia and the cool kids. I don't know how to describe it, but once I step in from the cold and into the Gelber, everything just feels right.

FOUNDATIONS WITH FRATICELLI

An Overheard Selection From the Best Section

Amy Huang | 1L

As one of the Quid's layout editors, I can safely say that the Overheard section is my favourite part of the editing process. It's the closest I get to feeling like Gossip Girl. *Spotted: 1L prof references pop culture.*

(It's also blissfully easy to format, but that's beside the point.)

Thus, it's with great pleasure that I'm extending this week's Overheard to feature the incomparable Prof. Víctor Muñiz-Fraticelli, AND including the usual few quotes.

May the humour from our professors get us through this exam season! Friends, transsystemic jurists, mcgillians, I salute you. Thank you for having me on the team this year.

You are just two steps away from the divine!

Keep Hart in your heart! Remember Hart quite fondly because your experience will be... Fuller.

There are no illegal strikes, only unsuccessful ones.

Pizza and twinkies satisfy a craving in the human psyche.

Are you a chaos Muppet like Ernie, or an order Muppet like Bert? Cookie Monster is a chaos muppet. Kermit is an order Muppet. Miss. Piggy thinks she's an order Muppet, but she's a chaos Muppet. Law is an order muppet argument.

The law is not going to heal your broken heart!

OVERHEARD

Prof: So what would be the residual policy consideration? "Be nice to cats"?

1L: Coffee is my food.

Prof: [The solar eclipse is] certainly not as majestic as good faith, but I am told it happens less often.

Prof: *squawking* Federal law! Federal law! Federal law!

THANK YOU FOR LETTING ME BE YOUR AMBASSADOR

Jacob Shannon | 2L, LSA VP External

This year, my 2L year, I had the privilege of representing your interests to the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU) as the Law Student Association (LSA) Vice President of External Affairs.

I went back and forth about whether I wanted to return to student politics after having such a good run the first time. I loved my mandate as President of the Nursing Undergraduate Society (NUS). I ran against a close friend in a positive campaign, received much more support than I expected, and, perhaps most importantly, finally convinced myself that I'm not the odd one out. After a childhood of taunting that impacted my confidence and founded the imposter syndrome that still haunts me today, this was no small victory.

Evidently, I ran for VP External. The VP External of any student association often works in the background; I don't have a budget to spend, I haven't cast any decisive votes on controversial issues, and I certainly have not been able to fix the largest problems we face as students at McGill. With that said, I think my biggest victory this year has been representing the nuance in the views of law students.

We are an opinionated faculty, but what unites us is our tendency to explain these opinions with persuasive arguments grounded in evidence. It is fun to debate with my classmates because the conversation is informative and arms me with more knowledge for future discussion. Thanks to the quality of debate and the candour of students at the faculty, I feel my worldview has evolved since entering this community.

My classmates and professors have taught me the world is more nuanced than I previously believed. The maelstrom of opinion that we are exposed to as we move through this faculty makes it impossible that anyone leaves completely unchanged. If McGill law cannot already be said to have a prerequisite admissions requirement of nuanced opinion, it can absolutely claim to beat this nuance into its students by the time they graduate. For this, we are all better advocates.

As a result of this diversity, I struggled to orient myself in a role requiring that I represent a community that is not a monolith. A few shared positions rose to the top in discussions with students. First, the LSA is a student union—our most central purpose is to fight for student interest and this means opposing tuition hikes by collective action every time they are proposed. Second, students have the right to speak publicly about political issues close to their heart and deserve protection from the university and their peers against doxing and harassment. Third, because student opinion is diverse, student associations should unite students around common ground where collective action is possible and effective.

Aside from advocating these three points, most of my work as your VP External has centered around infusing nuance into SSMU discussions where possible. This has not always been easy, and it has taught me better restraint. Sometimes this meant forcing myself to listen harder when I wanted to react instead. In some cases, listening led to a discovery that the opinion was more nuanced than I first thought. Other times listening led to a well-prepared counterpoint. There is a lesson here for our faculty: those who attentively listen to divergent opinions and search for nuance within them are better able to identify common ground and work out from it.

I am grateful that I returned to student politics because it still had more to teach me. The most important lesson learned was that a nuanced world is unfit for immediate categorical judgement. This faculty can have the conversations necessary to make for a better world. We reach common ground faster when these conversations proceed on a basis of patience, active listening, and a desire to understand the best and most nuanced version of our peer's opinion.

Thank you to the undergraduate law students who helped teach me these lessons—I will remember our conversations for the rest of my life. My first run in student politics taught me that I belong in my community, and this second one confirmed that I enjoy advocating on its behalf. Thank you for the giving me the opportunity to be the ambassador of a community as diverse and well-reasoned as ours.

LETTER OF THANKS TO ASEF FUND AND SSMU CLUBS FUND

ADELA and MJSDL

The Annual Environmental Law Networking Evening, held on February 29th, owes its success to the generous support of the Alumni Student Engagement Fund and SSMU Clubs Fund. The McGill Environmental Law Association (ADELA) and the McGill Journal of Sustainable Development Law (MJSDL) collaborated to bring together over 70 students at the Maison du développement durable, located at the intersection of Clark and Ste. Catherine Streets. Esteemed lawyers specializing in environmental law, aboriginal law, and corporate governance, representing both large and small law firms, as well as public organizations, came together to share their expertise and enjoy valuable exchanges with students. Once again, our heartfelt thanks to ASEF and the SSMU for their invaluable contribution to making this year's edition a resounding success! We hope to see so many of you there again next year!

La Soirée annuelle de réseautage en droit de l'environnement, qui s'est tenue le 29 février, doit son succès à la

généreuse contribution du Fond ASEF et du SSMU Clubs Fund. L'Association du droit de l'environnement de McGill (ADELA) et le Journal du droit du développement durable de McGill (MJSDL) ont collaboré pour rassembler plus de 70 étudiants à la Maison du développement durable, située à l'intersection des rues Clark et Sainte-Catherine. Des avocats éminents spécialisés en droit de l'environnement, droit autochtone, et en gouvernance, représentant aussi bien de grands que de petits cabinets d'avocats, ainsi que des organismes publics, se sont réunis pour partager leur expertise et profiter d'un échange précieux. Une fois de plus, nous remercions chaleureusement ASEF et le SSMU pour leur contribution inestimable à la réussite de l'édition de cette année ! Nous espérons vous y retrouver en si grand nombre de nouveau l'année prochaine!

COURSE AUX STAGES CUCKHOLDING

Alexia Armstrong | 3L

This March, I started dating nine people. I had swiped on three others, but they never swiped back. My first nine dates are an intense blur. We started with the typical "so… what do you do for fun?" and then flew straight into plans and aspirations. Meeting up in person made me quickly understand who I was actually into. I broke up with one right after our first date because #boundaries. One of them broke up with me because #theydontknowwhattheyremissing. But more importantly, my heart was starting to fall for two people.

For the rest of the week, I went on some second dates. Like I said, there were two I was starting to fall for, but I'm looking to get *hitched* so I played the game with a few other people in case the attraction wasn't mutual. It felt strange going on dates with these people when I knew I liked other people more. It felt dishonest.

One morning, I had a coffee date with Suitor 1 at a café, where I briefly talked to the barista while placing my order. The date went well. An hour later, I had another date lined up. We were supposed to go to a different café, but Suitor 2 suggested we go to the same café because it has more seating. Same barista. Complicit smile. That barista knew I had two suitors. Neither of us addressed it, but I'll never forget those knowing eyes. Judging? Congratulating? I'll never know.

The next day, it got worse. I had just broken up with another suitor, starting to see that my two favourites were showing interest back. I had a lunch date with Suitor 2 because we'd really hit it off. Suitor 2 was not my dream partner, but they were the nicest, and that deserved a good chance if I'm really thinking marriage. We meet at the fanciest sushi restaurant I have ever seen, and I know I'm being wooed. We start chatting, conversation flows. We talk about running, something we have in common, we're laughing, and in walks one of my two dream suitors, Suitor X. I panic. In an empty restaurant, Suitor X and their date get seated next to me and my date. Suitor X is clearly also on a date. They look as uncomfortable as me. Worse, Suitor X and Suitor 2 know each other. My date explains to me who Suitor X is. They don't know that I know and that Suitor 2 knows. Or do they know? They move tables. I don't even like sushi.

But the next day, on a date with Suitor X, I clear the air. I'm not quite ready to tell them I love them, because I'm still playing it out with one final suitor, Suitor Y, that I'm eyeing. But deep down, I know. The day after, I declare my love to Suitor X, and while they're not quite ready to say it back, I come out of our date feeling good. I go straight into another date with Suitor Y. The problem is that I can also really picture myself with Suitor Y, they're stable and well-respected. Suitor Y has everything a girl like me could want, but I'm still drawn to Suitor X.

On Friday morning, both of them call me. While I know I love them both, I declare my love to Suitor X, and they say it back, and I'm excited for what our future holds.

COUCH SHOPPING

Anonymous

Here's a moment that, in retrospect, should've been a fourth wall break in the grand comedy of my life:

An upperclassman is smiling stupidly at me, eyes lit up like they're in on a joke, and they're extending the invite to me. I don't know their name; I held it in my mouth for all of two seconds before letting it slip out into the void. Do they even go here? Surely they must.

"Law school is like high school all over again," they're saying. The past enters, stage left. I mentally boot it to the side, paste an equally stupid grin on my own face, and wave off the comment.

If this was an episode of *Fleabag*, the upperclassman would smirk at the camera. Say something sarcastic, like, *that's not going to be relevant to the plot at all*. Turn back to me like I didn't just see them pause time to address our live studio audience.

I file the interaction under "Potentially Important Narrative Tool" and think no further on it. Nothing could be as bad as high school, right?

—

"You've been gritting your teeth."

No shit, I want to respond, but I can't, not when I've got a vacuum hooked over the corner of my mouth and at least two other tools stuffed inside, like I'm some taxidermic doe getting my snout stuffed and pretty. *I stare at a screen twenty hours a day. I wake up and I don't know who I am. I'm at home again. Displacement zero, or maybe 1793 km.*

"Stress," I say instead, once I've got a chance. My lips are painfully dry. I think mournfully about the lip balm I forgot to grab before coming back for the break, which leads me to my shoebox apartment, and the IKEA we passed on the drive up to the office, and I blurt: "I'm actually thinking of buying a couch."

Well. I wasn't, but *now* I am. So.

To her credit, the hygienist doesn't say anything—she only gives me a weird look and motions for me to pry my jaw apart again. Something tells me she didn't sign up to deal with barely coherent law students. There are photos of children at the front desk, all smiling toothily and showing off their pink, pink gums. *Live laugh love Jesus* quotes adorn the walls. I infer that the only reason I'm allowed to be here is because my cousins have the boss by the metaphorical balls, like this dentistry-themed limbo of mine is a fact pattern I can puzzle through. And then I think about how easy it'd be to stick three fingers in my mouth, rip my face in half, and let me bleed out.

There's a space right next to my nightstand, just over a metre long. I could totally fit a small couch, and then if I got a big monitor for my desk, I could, like. I don't know. Play video games in my nonexistent free time. Or something.

—

My high school was one hallway. Grade 11 and 12 students had a small alcove next to the computer lab, crammed with three too many dirty sofas and decorated with—don't shoot, I'm just the messenger here—flags from various dictatorships and military regimes, memes about communism, and a framed pastel portrait of Post Malone with a watermelon head, aptly named *Post Melon*. At least in my year. I don't know if the grade after us continued the tradition of adding to the walls (the flag of North Korea was pinned to the ceiling and unreachable), or if they were as apathetic as the other 95% of the student body to the growing list of potentially/actually offensive material.

Anyway. It's a fine spring day after school in Grade 11, and I'm a blob on one of the couches, staring at a poster of a frog emblazoned with the words "Hippity Hoppity Abolish Private Property," when my math teacher delicately sits on the arm of the couch.

Smart woman, honestly. I have half my face smushed in the cushions, and I'm thinking I've probably picked up some sort of STD from it. But I'm moping, and I'm also pretty sure chlamydia doesn't work like that, so I keep my mouth shut and pretend she's not about to chew me out for being the world's biggest asshole.

She asks me if I'm okay. I accidentally lick the couch in my subsequent hysteria. I've gained forty pounds in less than two months, and I'm so angry about it, and angry at myself, that the line between fiction and reality is more of a watercolour blur. My best friend wants me to kill myself. I don't understand chemistry at all. I insulted one of the track stars today. Am I okay? My friends online are asking the same thing in my pocket, desperate to get through.

To this day, I still hear her voice when I'm alone, the exact cadence of the question pinging back and forth between my ears.

—

Pineapples have been on my mind, flitting in and out at the periphery of my consciousness whenever I'm not numbing every braincell of mine with the distraction du jour.

Not the stuff on pizza, though I'll admit I love a good Hawaiian pizza. Think big pineapple chunks, expensive Provigo fodder, probably genetically modified or dunked in crazy preservatives to stay fresh for longer. Think, the stuff that burns your tongue and makes you remember that it's 1:22 AM on a school night, and you still have torts readings on your agenda.

The feeling of perpetual panic is easily masked over by the sight of my phone lighting up with a notification. I've been sent a meme by a friend who thought about me, something that is normal to want and feel validated by! It's a tweet about making friendship bracelets out of legal jargon.

I squash the voice telling me I reek so strongly of desperation that someone across the world can smell it, and the sound of my own laugh trails off awkwardly in the emptiness of my apartment. I should start looking for couches. Something colourful, preferably, like the cracked, orange monstrosity my roommate back in undergrad dragged into our living room. Or maybe sleek white and unwelcoming, the same as the other furniture around me. Y'know, to match.

Unthinkingly, I send the meme to The Group Chat—it's just our names along the top, and friendships in law school still don't feel solid enough to label, but nothing has felt solid for years, anyway—because I've forgotten that I have a reputation as an early sleeper to uphold. My pulse is racing as I Google *ikea montreal* like I'm being held at gunpoint. The term *duress* pops into my prefrontal cortex, fracturing it in the process. A laugh emoji reaction notification flashes across my screen. Then I'm scrolling through a selection of Swedish rugs. It's so easy to pretend I'm not fraying at the edges, film burning holes into myself. Why is nothing at IKEA on sale, I ask God.

Why are you up, comes the retort from above, in text form.

Reading fanfiction, I type, steadfastly ignoring the way I've sweat through my shirt, or the garbage piled up around me, tissues and take-out containers and empty pop bottles and it's not stress eating if it's just a couple pineapple chunks to keep me awake so I can do my readings. It could be so much worse. I could be doing drugs. Fucking my way through every dating app. Spending money I don't have. Fruits are healthy.

As it turns out, laughing alone isn't so awkward when your body is ten miles ahead of you in some unknown space. *Don't trust your brain after 5 PM,* supplies the aforementioned brain, helpfully.

—

My parents sit me down with the forever ominous *can we talk* question-that's-actually-a-demand, some time after my chat with my math teacher. Perfectly vague, works wonders to instill fear. Give it a shot next time you want your child to unearth their soul from the depths of teenage angst and turn into a blubbering toddler. The only thing is, we're in the car and en route to the mall, as is routine, and I know this fight is about to take a humiliatingly public flavour.

The one good thing is the forced distance in the car and the distraction of the road. That way, none of us need to look each other in the eye when they reveal that my latest stunt triggered emergency meetings with the school admin. I need an intervention, or I might be held back a grade, which naturally has me yelling and spitting. Real mature.

The rest of the night is mostly a blur of three people handling a bad situation badly. With time, I've come to appreciate that parents are human too. It probably did a number on them to realize their trophy baby was more like a rusted pipe, dented and crumbling from how often it'd been used to shatter glass windows in glass houses.

I wanted to get away from you, I shout in the smack middle of Winners | Homesense, while my mother stubbornly browses the racks of clearance shirts. For me, because my shirts don't fit anymore. That's how she says *I love you*.

I scream at her, beg her to listen to me, tell her she's never listened to me in my life. Is it still hypocrisy if you don't know?

In my dreams, I hear the scrape of metal on metal from hangers catching on the racks, echoing that horrible voice.

Are you okay?

God. Stop asking me.

—

They say that children inherit the father's sins, but it's genetic diseases you should really watch out for.

I'm astutely avoiding my professor's gaze and covering an eye, feeling whispers of my old optometrist's usual *one or two* interrogation brush against the part of my mind I've firmly shut in a box. It's labelled HOME, and it has absolutely no business being open in the middle of Constitutional Law.

Class is almost over. The professor is saying words, but something in my brain has broken between hearing things and processing them. I just got new contacts. Why can't I see

properly out of one eye? It's the same eye my dad needs to drop something in three times a day. My mom is pestering me about buying special sunglasses to see the solar eclipse.

No matter how hard I blink, the text on the slide never comes into focus, not the way it does for my other eye. Eventually, the strain starts to hurt. I feel fourteen again, swiping artificial orange flavouring off my teeth with my tongue to ground myself while I watch a needle pierce the unseeing, clouded eye of a mouse.

It's like I have latex gloves on—the only barrier between my clammy hands and the empty syringe I'm holding for the scientist I'm shadowing. The lady who manages animal care ran into us in the elevator earlier and told me I wasn't allowed to be here. My nausea agrees. I know the animals don't feel anything from the anaesthetic, and that they don't understand anything else but their current lives, but the other mice won't stop *squeaking*. Shuffling in their little cages. Eating and drinking and pissing and shitting in a space no larger than my forearm, reminding me that they're alive.

I was cast as Monsieur Souris for a play in elementary school, on account of my mouse-like face. Do I have a needle in my eye? A mouse would probably like a couch in its cage, for comfort before the slaughter.

The class laughs at something. I break out of my reverie into an uneasy smile, exchanging a glance with my friend.

What, she mouths at me.

I'm halfway back to reality. Probably. I still feel unbearably human, fleshy and mammalian and painfully aware of the fact that one day, I'll degrade into a shell of a person, every second stripping my telomeres shorter and unravelling the time bombs buried beneath my skin. I thought I'd be dead at sixteen.

Side note: Did you know that if you cover up one eye, the other eye will try to compensate for the loss of vision? Compensation is human nature. Try that for your next torts class.

—

The deal is this: I get a therapist, and high school leaves me alone.

Right away, I know the first therapist I see isn't the one for me. She insists that I have anxiety. I tell her that's a funny way of saying "eating disorder." She takes one look at my body and decides that it's better to say "disordered eating," like that makes any difference. I go a week without eating anything and then spend two weeks stuffing myself until I vomit while watching Markiplier play *Five Nights at Freddy's*, and the cycle continues. *Are you okay?*

I curl up on the couch in her office and say I don't want to be hospitalized. Here's a secret: Part of me wants to be locked away and drugged up until I'm nothing, because then maybe someone in a white coat will tell me that it's not my fault. Maybe someone will take all the blame, all the hurt I've dealt out in spades, the hurt I've received tenfold in karmic retribution, and cast it into space, where it'll never touch me again.

Martin Scorsese once talked about the guilt that comes from just being alive. I'm swimming in it, circling the drain and waiting to drop, and this lady wants to tell me I get abnormally nervous about social situations. *Girl*. I'm sixteen and living past my expiration date. I'm basically cheating death itself. Sure, I've got an anxiety disorder.

She's not the right therapist for me, but I stick with her anyway to get the adults around me to stop talking. I endure her Cognitive Behavioural Therapy program. My friends, in support, call it Cock and Ball Torture.

—

Every week of law school, I've vowed to stop spending so much money. Every week, I break my vow. There's always an iced coffee with my name on it, calling to me like a siren, where Peel is the sea that I traverse for hard-won caffeine.

I line up for Gert's alone sometimes, and it feels like being scraped raw off pavement. There are so many undergrads, all exhausted, but glowing with the frenzied fervour of young adulthood that I saw—and experienced—in my own time at university.

It'll be okay, I want to tell them. *Revel in this feeling.* They'd probably look at me like I'm insane, which, yeah. Fair. But give me another few decades, at least. I won't tick down without a fight first.

That's all to say that I'm sitting on a couch in the Atrium with an iced coffee when a friend sends me a post about living life as if you were an alien experiencing Earth for the first time. It's been a while since I've had a sense of time passing, since I've been able to grasp the incorporeal bits of my being and shove them back into my body, so I give the exercise my best shot.

What a joy it is to feel a cool breeze on your face, to sense your fingers numbing in your pockets as you pick your way through growing grass towards a dry sidewalk.

What a sorrow it is to weep alone in your bathtub, the weight of your failures and the constant *guiltshamefearhorror* pressing upon you, stronger than gravity.

What a delight it is to sip on a sugary drink without caring about the calorie count.

What a shock it is to remember something you forgot you'd forgotten, the warmth of hot milk opening your mind's eye to foggy glimpses of a home unmarred by resentment.

What a privilege it is to experience being human, with all its soaring heights and free-fall drops. What beauty! What joy!

—

By the time I graduate from high school, the entire ordeal seems more like a bad scan of a book, with text blurring and spots of black dotting the pages. I'm one of the eight or nine people who have an average above 90, and isn't that just hysterically sad, that somehow, I've walked through the white-hot fires of my own, personal hell and maintained my grades at the same time. I think, *if I ever get to law school, here's proof it'll never touch me.*

At the graduation reception, my band director approaches me with a gift. It's a collection of sheet music—Chopin's preludes. She tells me she had it during her time in university, but that I could do more with it. Her voice wobbles suspiciously, tellingly.

I wonder if she's made a habit of giving away her treasures to her favourite students. I'm too busy bursting into tears to ask. Of all the adults in that miserable building, she was the only one who made *are you okay* feel more like *you'll be okay*, with the conviction of a priest wholeheartedly trusting in God's plan.

Later, while I wait for my parents to pick me up from the reception, I sit on the couch in the front lobby. My ex-best friend's mom gives me the stink-eye as she walks by, and I put on my best customer service voice to wish her a nice night. She can't hurt me where it matters anymore, I realize, with the kind of growing excitement reserved for new game releases.

I'm seventeen, and I'm living past my expiration date. I'm seventeen, and for once, I really feel like living.

—

I can't find a cheap couch that scratches the itch in my brain. The problem is the space, I think—most couches have some depth to them, and I'm looking for something narrow. Or maybe the problem is the walls. They're soulless, because I left my posters in the shadows of adolescence, and I can't afford the kind of art I'd want to decorate with, and this place is temporary, besides.

Honestly, the emptiness is a little unnerving. I'm starting to believe I'm haunted. I wake up choking from vividly violent dreams, and the pillows smell like my other roommate from undergrad, the one who'd visit during lockdown just to make sure I wasn't going insane by myself in our three-bedroom apartment. I don't know if ghosts like to take the shape of people I've pushed away, or if this is some higher deity reminding me about the importance of companionship. It frightens me all the same.

It also reminds me of a *House* episode, where Dr. House and a sexual assault victim end up in a philosophical debate about how to cope with trauma. From it, there's a line that's bounced around my head since I was twelve: "Life is a series of rooms, and who we get stuck in those rooms with adds up to what our lives are."

Law school is a community if you let it be one, but you need to seek it out on your own. Nobody has the strength to punch through carbon fibre to get to you. Nobody has the time to wait for the scrapes on their knuckles to heal. You need to enter the room by yourself.

So I make plans for the future with friends. I attend Skit Nite and laugh like nobody's watching. A gifset of Elle Woods pops up on my feed to remind me that law is about passion and faith in oneself. *Are you okay?* Exams are two weeks away. "DIY friendship bracelets" pops up in my search history more than once.

The upperclassman I met in September was both right and wrong. Law school is just like high school all over again, except it's not, because *law school can't touch me*, I remind myself, tossing all the shit around me into black garbage bags and shoving my feet into my shoes. Self care is about cleaning your space when you don't want to. Self care is telling people you love them. Self care is understanding that the walls aren't a cage anymore.

Anyway, I'm okay. I'm better than okay; I'm alive.

—

BTW: IKEA's Jättebo couch has storage underneath and comes in a delightfully hideous green colour, if you've got $850.00 + tax lying around. #NotSponsored

WE CAN DO THIS

Astrology Anne

In this wild, hectic, and overwhelming time of the semester, the stars hope you are taking care of yourself the best you can, finding time for joy and enjoying the sun as much as possible. We are almost there!

Oh **Aries**, you will find yourself in an oh-so-unoriginal enemies-to-lovers plot line, you're basically in The Hating Game. You have been known to whisper to your friends "Put your f*ing hand down, you've already spoken 7 times today in class" as they raise their hand, and yesterday I heard you say "I had to sit beside BLEEP in the Gelb, they smelled like a SNAIL" (not going to lie Aries, that last one was a little harsh). But something magical will change inside you, and you will see BLEEP, for who they truly are… YOUR LAW SCHOOL SOUL MATE. Congratulations, you can cross a faculty romance off your bucket list. 1Ls, do you have any advice for our dear Aries?

Surprise, **Taurus**, the firm, BLEEEEP, has decided to #sponsor* your next BDAY! That is so exciting given the ELITE McGill Law students the firm swiped up this year during Course.

*To accept the firm-sponsored event, the recipient must be willing to give up their soul to the firm FOR THEIR ENTIRE LIFE (or until they burn out and get divorced) … Seems like a pretty solid deal to me. Cheerz to Big Law!

Exciting news, **Gemini**. I have heard through the astrology grapevine that you will be one-half of the next generation of the #Justine&Matt law power couple. Are you going to take over the LSA…maybe the MJL (or whatever its called)… or maybe just hit up coffeehouse on the regular? Love (and #power) will be entering your life VERY soon. You're welcome, Gemini.

Cancer, the stars have spoken, you shall be entering your angsty teen era. For the boomers in the crowd (…looking at you mature students), being an angsty teen is more a state of mind, than about age. To quote the queen of angsty teens, Olivia Rodrigo, "Thoughts, blah, thoughts, blah" (we can neither confirm nor deny whether she was referring to Dean Leckey's monthly updates… don't worry Dean Leckey, I read them).

Surprise, 2Ls! Thanks to the work of some lovely **Leo** 2Ls, property is assist only. Jokes, no it isn't.

Virgo, today is the day. You have been waiting all semester to ask out your exchange student crush. They've been making eyes at you all semester. Are they cute, or do they just have an accent? We will never truly know. In a surprise turn of events, they approach you! Yay, you won't have to experience the social anxiety of asking someone out. You can tell they are nervous. They are shaking and sweating, and their eyes are beginning to water. As the words start to come out of their mouth, they puke all over your business casual attire #splashzone. OMG they were so nervous to ask you out they puked all over you!!!! It makes sense given how hot you are. Or were they just asking for your notes and had the flu? That is one secret the stars will never tell.

Wow…. I heard Matt is going pretty wild for the last Mocha Monday! Don't forget to stop by the Mocha Monday stick and poke station, **Libra**, as you will be first in line to get CCQ art 1457 tattooed on your bicep to show the Barreau that you are a hard-core civil law connoisseur. I heard they'll pass you immediately… they'll never have to know that you *only* know art 1457.

OMGGGGG **Scorpio**, you are going to get a love note in class!!! AND it is from Prof. BLEEP. Oh, how they are sexxxxxy. It is like they have been *trying* to make you fall in love with them since the day you walked into their class. Is it the way they don't teach anything and make your classmates (who are as equally lost) teach every lesson, or the way they pretend they don't know what is on the exam despite it being the same format every year… they are so mysterious, it's like that want to see you 1-on-1 in office hours. SO HOT. Scorpio, it gets better, as you walk out of class, THEY WINK AT YOU. Wow, what a day. Scorpio, you're so lucky, I heard that there are a couple profs in the faculty who married their students… are you next?

Sagittarius, bad news, you're going to find a rat in your locker. That sucks. I guess they've made their way from the basement of the Gelb to your unclean locker sanctuary. You can't win them all.

Congratulations, **Aquarius**! You got into the MJL (or whatever), the most prized position (that no one wants, and the vast majority of us avoid like the plague) in the faculty! You enjoy those 0.0237 credits a semester for 100 hours a week. Remember, as Prof. Gupta says, law school is about the #friends you make along the way.

Dear **Capricorn**, given the funding cuts at the university #ViveLaFrancophonie, we are unable to publish your horoscope at this current moment. The stars are on strike. We are sorry for any inconvenience. With any concerns, please email the SAO.

Pisces, sadly the stars didn't say anything about you. There are many reasons why this could be the case, it may suggest that you will drop off the face of the Earth to avoid finals, get abducted by aliens, or illustrate the fact that I have no idea how to read the stars. In my humble opinion, I think option two is most likely. Good luck with exams!

OUR VOICES FOR A FREE PALESTINE
NOS VOIX POUR UNE PALESTINE LIBRE

An End of Year Message from LS4PM

LS4PM

As the semester draws to a close, we come together as Law Students for Palestine at McGill (LS4PM) to reflect on a year of organizing, solidarity and bearing witness to the tragedies unfolding in Palestine.

Since October of last year, 33,000 + Palestinians have been killed by Israel.[1] Thousands more are presumed dead under the rubble. Entire bloodlines have been annihilated. The majority of housing and civic infrastructure has been rendered irreparable. Miscarriages among pregnant women have increased 300%[2] and women are undergoing caesarean sections without anesthesia. The number of amputees, particularly among children, has sky rocketed. The situation in Gaza is now considered to comprise the largest cohort of pediatric amputees in history.[3] The number of children killed in Gaza is now higher than from four years of world conflict

[1] https://www.aljazeera.com/news/longform/2023/10/9/israel-hamas-war-in-maps-and-charts-live-tracker

[2] https://www.care.org/news-and-stories/news/the-long-shadow-of-starvation-in-gaza/#:~:text=A%20skyrocketing%20miscarriage%20rate,attacks%20began%20three%20months%20ago.

[3] https://www.newyorker.com/news/dispatch/the-children-who-lost-limbs-in-gaza#:~:text=UNICEF%20estimates%20that%20a%20thousand,pediatric%20trauma%2C%20told%20me%20recently.

combined.[4] Deliberate blockades by Israel are now causing Gazans to starve to death. Famine is now imminent, and starvation in Gaza is the "highest ever recorded on the IPC [Integrated Food Security Classification] scale, both in terms of number of people and percentage of the population. Never before have we seen such rapid deterioration into widespread starvation."[5] The United Nations expert on torture is seeking to investigate numerous reports of executions, mass murder, mutilations of hostages, sexual violence, "mass detention, ill-treatment and enforced disappearance of Palestinians in northern Gaza by the Israeli military, and has recorded the arrests of thousands in the West Bank."[6] Legal professionals have compiled a database of 500+ publicly available Israeli incitements to genocide coming from decision-makers, army personnel, legislators, journalists, influencers, former government officials, and public expression.[7] Last week, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories, Francesca Albanese, declared that "There are reasonable grounds to believe that the threshold indicating the commission of the crime of genocide…has been met."[8]

In January, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruled that Israel's acts amount to plausible genocide, and issued six provisional measures which include preventing and punishing genocidal acts and incitements, as well as ensuring that badly needed humanitarian aid reach Palestinians currently under siege. Communities around the world have mobilized in support of the long overdue cause for Palestinian liberation in unprecedented numbers. Despite this, Israel has doubled down on its assault of Palestinians in both Gaza and across the occupied territories causing the ICJ, on March 28, to issue *new* orders for Israel to ensure "unhindered provision of aid", and to stop "preventing" Palestinians from accessing that aid.[9] The implications of this should be terrifying for anyone invested in the rule of law.

Over the last six months, while we were receiving a legal education, the world has witnessed the destruction of all 12 universities and hundreds of schools in Gaza. At least three university presidents and 95 deans and professors have been killed by Israel since October.[10] As members of an academic community, we are horrified at the deliberate destruction of the intellectual life of an entire population, constituting scholasticide.[11] We are further dispirited by the lack of attention, care and urgency with which McGill has tended to this issue. We oppose McGill's deliberate obfuscation of its own complicity in maintaining colonial violence, both on Turtle Island and worldwide. As such, it is pertinent that we take this moment to reflect on this past year and articulate our aspirations for the next one.

On student activism and what it has meant this year at McGill

At McGill, students have shown that activism can take many forms. In fall 2023, McGill undergraduate students voted for the *Policy Against Genocide in Palestine* with an overwhelming 78.7% of voting students (and record participation) voting in favour of divesting from all corporations and institutions complicit in genocide, settler colonialism, apartheid, or ethnic cleansing against Palestinians.[12] This work illustrates the importance of student organizing, despite institutional attempts to suppress social justice-oriented mobilization. Importantly, such efforts are part of a longer history of student-led engagement at McGill. It was students who pushed McGill to divest from the apartheid regime in South Africa in the 1980s.[13] More recently, students were finally successful in their campaign to pressure McGill to divest from fossil fuel companies in 2024.[14] We are further encouraged by the Syndicat général des professeures et professeurs de l'UdeM (SGPPUM) who recently adopted BDS resolutions, and we call upon our professors at McGill to demonstrate similar courage. As a Faculty of Law that prides itself on providing a legal education whereby "students graduate with a cosmopolitan understanding of the law, one that is not confined to specific

[4] https://turkiye.un.org/en/263401-gaza-number-children-killed-higher-four-years-world-conflict

[5] https://www.oxfam.org/en/press-releases/gaza-hunger-figures-worst-record-says-oxfam

[6] https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/un-expert-torture-examines-treatment-palestinian-detainees-2024-03-08/#:~:text=for%20further%20consideration.-,The%20U.N.,thousands%20in%20the%20West%20Bank.

[7] https://law4palestine.org/law-for-palestine-releases-database-with-500-instances-of-israeli-incitement-to-genocide-continuously-updated/

[8] https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/03/1147976

[9] https://www.icj-cij.org/node/203847

[10] https://www.lemonde.fr/en/international/article/2024/03/07/all-12-universities-in-gaza-have-been-the-target-of-israeli-attacks-it-s-a-war-against- education_6592965_4.html#:~:text=The%20organization%20estimates%20the%20damage,than%2095%20deans%20and%20professors.

[11] https://theconversation.com/the-war-in-gaza-is-wiping-out-palestines-education-and-knowledge-systems-222055

[12] https://www.thetribune.ca/news/students-vote-in-favour-of-policy-against-genocide-in-palestine-reject-ssmu-base-fee-increase-21112023/

[13] McGill is proud to feature this activism against antiblack racism on its website: "After a prolonged student-led campaign organized by the McGill African Student Society (MASS) and the Black Students Network (BSN), McGill became the first Canadian university to announce it would divest in companies with ties to Apartheid South Africa." https://www.mcgill.ca/antiblackracism/about/history

[14] https://www.thetribune.ca/news/mcgill-divests-direct-holdings-from-carbon-underground-200-fossil-fuel-firms-16012024/

jurisdictions, or even legal traditions,"[15] we hope to someday soon see our university as a place that promotes peace, and rejects colonialism, dehumanization, violence, and racism.

At McGill law, student activism has meant remaining steadfastly committed to values of humanity and solidarity, and in the use of our privilege to work for the liberation of all peoples. It has fostered a community of people we trust, admire, and respect, who protect others, and who stand in solidarity against all forms of oppression. So many of our fellow students have expressed private support for the Palestinian cause. While we acknowledge the impulse to refrain from publicly lending your voices to this issue –due to very real safety and professional concerns– we invite you to push past discomfort. If you have ever contemplated what you might have done during historical periods of gross injustice, your actions towards the Palestinian plight are a clear metric. While some of you may be new to the struggle, the struggle is not new. Palestinians have endured seventy-six years of occupation, settler colonialism, apartheid, and now, a genocidal campaign.

Solidarity across movements

Engaging in student organizing has shown us the importance and power of solidarity across movements. Transnational solidarity efforts have long been critical to actualizing the ongoing work toward decolonization and the universal application of human rights. Seeing so many different social and cultural groups, cities, politicians, academic societies, unions and collectives standing in solidarity with the Palestinian cause has lent tremendous strength to the movement, and to us. We know that liberation, decolonization and anti-oppression movements are connected and grow with solidarity, and we will continue to support them. Doing so compels us to condemn all forms of oppression, imperialism, racism, antisemitism, islamophobia, transphobia, homophobia, sexism, ableism, xenophobia, and dehumanization.

Through this solidarity, we learn from and follow the lead of Indigenous peoples of Turtle Island and join them in their struggle for liberation and self-determination. We specifically show our gratitude to the Mohawk Mothers for their continued strength in fighting colonial violence perpetrated by McGill University, and for lending their voices to the Palestinian cause. We stand in solidarity with you.

We also show gratitude towards the group of Black law students for their statement in this publication in solidarity with the Palestinian people.[16] The authors of that piece reminded us of the link between the movements of Black peoples around the world, Palestinian resistance and the importance of transnational solidarity as a mechanism for liberating all peoples impacted by colonialism and oppression.

Through our continued work, we center the people resisting colonial violence of all kinds. The struggles for liberation in Palestine, Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Ethiopia, Turtle Island and elsewhere are all linked.

In the months ahead, LS4PM remains committed to continuing to build solidarity across these distinct, yet interrelated movements.

No one is free until we are all free.

LS4PM – Our hopes for the future

We hope to see widespread student mobilization throughout our faculty. As future lawyers and jurists, it is incumbent upon us to facilitate the pursuit of justice through the rule of law. Our voices and actions matter. We will continue building partnerships, collaborations, and solidarity with other collectives, groups, and professors.

We hope to see the ratification of the democratically supported *Policy Against Genocide in Palestine* and McGill's divestment from weapons manufacturers. Moreover, we will support all efforts to ensure that McGill aligns with the numerous universities, and their law schools, around the world which have taken clear moral and divestment positions against the genocide in Palestine. As growing numbers of legal professionals in Canada and globally remind us "terms such as 'occupation', 'apartheid', and 'genocide' have established legal meanings, applicable to Israel's actions and practices towards Palestinians."[17] It would be a disservice to our university to continue suppressing legitimate, and legally grounded, criticism of Israel.

We will work toward the creation of academic spaces that train students in TWAIL and decolonial legal paradigms. This scholarship is not marginal despite institutional practice to treat it as such. A truly transsystemic education at a world-class institution demands that this work be central to our legal education.

While we hope to see an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza, we recognize that there remain immense challenges ahead. These include an end to the Israeli occupation in Palestine, the dismantling of Israel's apartheid legal system, the right of return of Palestinians in the diaspora, and the guarantee of equal rights to everyone living in historic Palestine – regardless of race, ethnicity or religion.

Le mot de la fin

We are here to stay, and we welcome you to join us!
In solidarity until a Free Palestine,
LS4PM

[15] https://www.mcgill.ca/centre-crepeau/projects/transsystemic

[16] "A Statement on Palestinian Solidarity From Black Law Students at McGill," Quid Novi Volume 45 No 11, January 23, 2024. https://dochub.com/quid-law/6mO8oy7Kp2Jx77kwqg5p9J/qn-vol45-no11-pdf?dt=XK37PWmKNSCXgb7sroPr&pg=11

[17] https://www.alexneve.ca/blog/palestinian-rights-advocacy-international-law

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